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## **A Comparison of Human Rights in China with Those in the United States**

**Ren Yunshi BEIJING, March 10**

A number of American politicians have used the US as a "world human rights model" while wantonly attacking China's record on human rights.

The 1995 Human Rights Report released by the US Department of State once again spread rumors about, distorted and attacked China's record on human rights, but did not say a single word about serious human rights problems in the US.

To understand correctly and assess the state of human rights in China and the US fairly, it is useful to do a thorough comparison of the state of human rights in the two countries.

China and the US are about the same size in geographical area, but China's population is 4.6 times that of the US, while per capita acreage of farmland in China is just one-tenth of that of the US and per capita share of other resources is much lower than it is in the US.

China is a developing country with a low income, whereas the US is the No. 1 developed country in the world, the article pointed out.

Using methods used by the World Bank in 1994 to compute wealth, we find that the per capita wealth of Chinese is less than 1.6 percent of that of Americans.

In terms of natural resources, economic development, and other conditions essential to advancing human rights, China lags far behind the US.

However, when the difference of social systems in the two countries, the different attitudes of the two governments on protecting human rights, and the different efforts made as a result are considered, the conditions of human rights in China can be seen to be different from those in the US.

### **1. Constitutional Rights.**

First, the human rights specified in the US Constitution, that is, The constitutional rights of American citizens, are incomplete and do not include economic, social and cultural rights.

Human rights as specified by the Constitution's Bill of Rights and other amendments do not go beyond the scope of civil and political rights.

Various economic, social, and cultural rights announced in "The World Human Rights Declaration" and "The International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" are not recognized by the US Constitution, except for the rights to join trade unions or choose a job and a few other rights.

The US Constitution provides no guarantee for Americans' rights to have their basic needs satisfied or their right to avoid starvation or to be free from want.

Second, the US Constitution does not fully cover right to equality. Neither the US Constitution in 1787 nor its amendment in 1789 in the Bill of Rights contains provisions concerning the right to equality.

To date, the US Constitution has not contained provisions in principle concerning equality between various ethnic groups, equality between men and women and equality of citizens' rights.

Third, protection of human rights as provided for in the US Constitution is very limited.

The Constitution merely lists a number of individual rights, but it neither requests nor authorizes the US Congress or the federal government to take steps to protect those rights.

The constitutional scholar Louis Henkin noted that there is a great difference between Americans' constitutional rights and human rights as they are recognized internationally.

He noted that assumptions in the US about human rights, particularly in the area of equality, and economic and social rights, fall below current international standards.

This is an inherent drawback of America's human rights guarantee system, he pointed out.

In contrast, China's Constitution contains a comprehensive system of provisions on citizens' basic human rights and the protection of such rights.

Chapter Two of China's Constitution contains not only specific stipulations on citizens' political rights, but also complete provisions on economic, social, and cultural rights as well. It not only explicitly states that all citizens are equal before the law, but also specifies that all ethnic groups are equal, that men and women are equal, and that all citizens enjoy equal rights in all social aspects.

The chapter not only lists various rights of Chinese citizens, but also specifies the responsibilities of the state, society, collectives and individuals in advancing and protecting such rights.

Compared with the US, the Constitutional rights of Chinese citizens are much more extensive and specific, and the Chinese Government assumes much greater responsibility in advancing and protecting human rights.

## 2. Universal Suffrage.

Although the United States stipulated in its Constitution of 1787 that its citizens enjoy the right to vote, it imposed a number of restrictions in the areas of race, sex, property, educational background, age, and length of residence, and the legal right to vote for black people, women, Indians, and about a third of the white men was denied. The black people were given the right to vote in 1870, women in 1920, and Indians in 1948, or 94 years, 144 years, and 172 years, respectively, after the founding of the republic.

Further restrictions based on property ownership, a poll tax, and educational background were finally done away with by the law in 1856, 1964, and 1970 respectively.

It was not until 1971, nearly 200 years after the founding of the republic, that the United States adopted the 26th amendment to the Constitution stipulating that the right to vote for those aged 18 or older should not be discriminated against on the basis of age.

The People's Republic of China, soon after it was founded, clearly set forth the notion of universal suffrage of Chinese citizens in the "Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference", a constitutional document.

China's first Electoral Law, promulgated in 1953, and its first Constitution, promulgated in 1954, stated definitely that all citizens who have reached the age of 18, regardless of ethnic status, race, sex, occupation, class origin, religious belief, educational background, property, and length of residence, have the rights to vote and to stand for election, with the exception of persons deprived of these rights by law.

Universal suffrage was implemented in China 22 years earlier than it was in the United States, and 99.97 percent of Chinese citizen above the age of 18 now enjoy the right to vote and to stand for election - a rate that is higher than in the United States.

### **3. Turn-out for Elections.**

Participation by eligible voters in China's first general election, held in 1953, was 85.88 percent. It rose to around 90 percent and stayed there for all subsequent elections of the People's Congresses, and it was as high as 93.58 percent in the national election at the end of 1993.

The turn-out in all elections of the House of Representatives of the United States since the beginning of this century has hovered at somewhere between 30 and 60 percent. The presidential election, which is cited as a major political event in the country, had a turnout that reached a peak of 80 percent in 1866. Since that time, however, the highest voter turn-out in this century, has been only 65 percent.

### **4 Parliamentary Democracy.**

Congressional seats in the United States have come to be monopolized by a tiny number of wealthy people. To win an election in a congressional race, a candidate will spend un

immense amount of money for the campaign. Spending hundreds of thousands of dollars or even a million dollars in an election is not uncommon.

In the mid-term election in November 1994, the 35 senators elected spent an average of 3.7 million dollars each for the campaign.

According to statistics, in April 1994, at least 28 senators, more than a quarter of the Senate, were millionaires. Millionaires in the House of Representatives accounted for more than 11.5 percent, or at least 50 congressmen. The ratio of millionaires in the U.S. Congress was at least 30 times that of millionaires in US society as a whole, which is less than 0.5 percent. At least a quarter of the members of the Congress elected in 1994, who were Republicans, were millionaires.

An article in the Washington Post in 1994 said that the Congress of the United States belongs to, is ruled by, and serves the interests of the rich.

In China, elections of the deputies to the National People's Congress and local congresses are free from monetary restrictions. Whether a deputy wins or loses an election does not depend on the amount of money he or she has but rather on the contributions he or she has made to the state and to society, on his or her relations with the people and on his or her exploits in serving the people.

Election results have proven that elected deputies cover a wide range of society, embracing people of all ethnic groups, social strata, and occupations. Many outstanding workers, farmers, and teachers have been elected as deputies to the People's Congresses.

#### **5. Crime Rate.**

According to information released by the Department of Justice of the US, the number of people serving prison terms in the US at the end of 1994 totaled 5.1 million, accounting for 2.7 percent of the total adult population. Now the average annual number of cases of crimes stands at 35 million in the US and in every 100,000 people, 5,483 people report cases of crimes to police every year. The country's crime rate and the occurrence of criminal cases have remained at about two percent and six percent, respectively, for years.

In contrast with the US, China's crime rate and the occurrence of criminal cases is 0.06 percent and 0.2 percent, respectively. The ratio is one to 33 and one to 30.

#### **6. Violence and Murder.**

The US is the country with the most serious violent criminal acts. On average, two million cases of criminal violence occur annually, with six million victims, of whom 24,000 are murdered.

The number of murders in the US was a record 24,500 in 1993, 2.5 times the total number of murders in Canada, France, Germany, Britain and Japan in the same year.

In 1993, 9.8 people per 100,000 people were murdered every day. The proportion is five times that in China.

#### 7. Shooting Incidents.

Private handguns are strictly controlled in every country in the world except the US, which has listed in its constitution "the right to bear arms". The country has 220 million private firearms, almost one gun per capita.

A statistical report shows that the US witnesses one million criminal shooting incidents a year, more than 20,000 people are shot, and more than 10,000 commit suicide with guns.

About 33 women are raped at gun points every day in the US, 40 children are killed or wounded.

A report issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the US in 1994 said that random murders constitute a real danger for all Americans.

China does not regard the right to own a gun as a guarantee of human rights, and its society is not like that of the US, which is racked with the fear of shooting.

#### 8. Number of Rapes:

A survey by the Federal Foundation in 1993 said that a total of 1.5 million women had been raped over the previous five years, and 7.6 million women were victims of murder, robbery or other assaults.

In 1990 the frequency of rape rose to one every six minutes, and more than 70 out of every 100,000 women were raped.

In 1993 an average of 118 of 100,000 women aged from five to 59 were raped.

According to a report issued by the Department of Justice of the US in 1995, 500,000 rape cases occur annually, almost one every minute.

In its "1995 Human Development Report" the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) said that one out of six American women stands the chance of being raped during her lifetime. The rate of cases of criminal violence cases in the US is seven times that of Western Europe, and about 18 times higher than in China.

Joseph Biden, chairman of the US Senate Judiciary Committee, acknowledged that the number and frequency of rape cases in the US rank first in the world.

## **9. Number of Prisoners**

The United States has the largest prison population in the world. According to a report released by the Department of Justice, the number of federal and state prisoners exceeded one million in 1994. When those held in other jails are added, the total comes to around 1.5 million, the ratio of prisoners to total population being 565 per 100,000. Both numbers rank first in the world.

In China, the number of prisoners at the end of 1994 was 1.286 million, giving a ratio of 107 prisoners per 100,000 people.

When this is compared to the U.S., the U.S. ratio is more than five times that of China.

## **10. Recidivism Rate**

The rate of recidivism in the United States has stayed at more than 40 percent. According to one study, 50 to 70 percent of the juvenile delinquents in the U.S. committed crimes again within 12 months after being released.

In China, 90 percent of the juvenile delinquents do not break the law again after they are released. China has one of the lowest rates of recidivism in the world, with a rate that stays between six and eight percent.

## **11. Right to Privacy**

The United States has the most serious problems of infringement on citizens' privacy among the developed countries. According to a report released by the International Labor Organization, every year about 20 million American employees are monitored by electronic devices, accounting for eight percent of the country's total population.

In addition, 80 percent of the employees in insurance and telecommunications companies, and in banks and airline ticket offices have their telephone conversations monitored.

And the most serious violator of the right of privacy is the government itself. According to statistics, the U.S. government has 3.5 billion pieces of data on individuals.

In 1994, the US government agreed that the National Security Agency could equip every telephone or fax machine with a certain chip that could supply information, under the pretext of safeguarding national security.

In 1995, the FBI decided to expand the scope of telephone bugging to one percent of the country's total citizens, eavesdropping on one out of every 100 telephone or data transmission lines.

In China, such all-round routine invasion of citizens' rights of privacy does not exist, except when judiciary departments must take measures within the boundaries of the law.

#### **12. Slavery System**

The United States has an ignominious history in its treatment of blacks, who were subject to the system of slavery for 89 years, from independence in 1776 to the passage of the 13th amendment to the Constitution in 1865 which abolished slavery.

In fact, the slavery did not die out completely. The Mississippi State legislature did not pass a law abolishing slavery until as late as February of 1995.

With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, slavery on the mainland was ended, except in the case of Tibet. In 1959, out of respect for the Tibetan people's wishes, the Chinese Government undertook democratic reforms there, abolishing the feudal serf system. With that action, all remnant forms of slavery were wiped out across the Chinese mainland.

#### **13. Gap between the Rich and Poor**

The United States has the worst record of polarization among industrialized countries. According to official figures for 1995, the top one percent of the population own 40 percent of the country's wealth, an amount that exceeds the wealth of all those belonging to lower classes who account for 60 percent of the country's total population.

According to a report in Business Week in 1994, the top 20 percent of the population receive 44.6 percent of the country's total income. But, the bottom 20 percent earn 4.4 percent of the country's total income. The income earned by the former is more than ten times that of the latter.

In China, a 1994 survey conducted by the State Statistics Bureau of the top 20 percent of households and the bottom 20 percent of households showed the following: incomes of the top 20 percent were three times the incomes of the lowest 20 percent in cities and towns; the former were six times the latter in the countryside; and the weighted gap between the rich and poor when both urban and rural areas were taken into consideration, was 5.6 times. This demonstrates that the distribution of wealth has a far narrower gap than in the United States.

#### **14. The Homeless.**

According to statistics, over 80 percent of the five million poor families in the US can not afford to pay rent. The Clinton administration officially admitted in February 1994 that there were seven million homeless people in the US. The US Association for the Homeless estimates that about two to three million people in the US sleep in the open air every year, while in China the figure is only five to 7.5 percent of that of the US.

## **15. Illiteracy.**

According to a report entitled "US Adult Culture" issued by the US Department of Education, semi-illiterates account for about half of the US population. Among them, 42 million are semi-illiterates at the lowest level, while another 52 million semi-illiterates are only a little better educated. Semi-illiterate refers to the ability to read but not understand the meaning of common words.

The "Lianhe Zaobao" newspaper of Singapore in 1992 quoted US statistics as saying that half of the American people are illiterate.

China, on the other hand, through consistent anti-illiteracy efforts, reduced the number of illiterates and semi-illiterates (referring to those at or under 15 years of age who can not read or read very little) to 15.88 percent of the total population in 1990 and further to 12.01 percent, or 145 million people, in 1995, as against 80 percent in 1949, when the People's Republic was founded.

## **16. The Change in Living Standards.**

According to a report in the "Christian Science Monitor" in 1995, in the 22 years since 1973, the real income of 80 percent of American families has declined or remained unchanged, and the real living standards of ordinary people substantially dropped, with many of them falling below the poverty line.

The average hourly net income of the American workers decreased at an annual rate of 0.73 percent between 1974 and 1993. Calculated at the price level of 1987, the weekly salary of the US worker in 1993 had dropped by 14.7 percent as compared with that in 1970.

Between 1988 and 1993 the productivity of the American private businesses rose by 5.9 percent, while the hourly income of the workers dropped by four percent. The purchasing power of an ordinary American family was 1,400 US dollars lower in 1993 than in 1991.

Referring to information published by the US government, the Social and Political Research Institute of Fordham University of the US concluded that the life quality and social health index of the US was 41 in 1993 as against 77.5 in 1973.

Though the living standard of the Chinese people has been comparatively low, it has been substantially improved over the past 20 years. China's economy has grown at an average annual rate of nine percent. Meanwhile, the per capita income of the Chinese people, which doubled between 1977 and 1987, is continuously rising at a high speed.

Between 1990 and 1994 the per capita actual income of the urban families in China grew at a rate of 38.3 percent, at an annual rate of 8.4 percent; the per capita actual income of

the rural residents increased by 18.2 percent, at an annual rate of 4.3 percent; and savings deposits of both urban and rural residents soared by over 200 percent.

After citing China's tremendous achievements in improving the people's living standards, Ernest Stern, a vice-president of the World Bank, pointed out that such great progress made in such a short period of time has been rarely made by any other social grouping in human history.

## 17. Racial Discrimination.

The US has long been notorious for its racial discrimination. Discrimination against ethnic groups remains the darkest abyss in the US society. The black people, Hispanics and other ethnic groups now account for 17 percent of the total population. However, only a tiny number of them can squeeze into the upper circles in the political, economic and social spheres. In the US Congress there is no seat at all for many ethnic groups. Though the number of black congressmen increased from 25 to 39 in 1992, the ratio remains at 7.4 percent, much lower than the ratio of black people in the American population.

According to a US government survey in 1995, two thirds of the total US population or 57 percent of the employees are women or come from ethnic groups. However, some 97 percent of the senior managerial personnel of big corporations are white males. In sharp contrast, of the 5.1 million convicts in jail, black and Hispanic people account for two thirds. And of the 1.5 million people in custody, colored people account for 70 percent. About one third of the blacks, Hispanics and Indians live in poverty, triple the rate for the white people.

The black people account for only 13 percent of the US population, but the number of black people who are murdered is six times the figure for white people. Moreover, some 54.2 percent of the country's criminals, over 40 percent of the convicts sentenced to death and 48 percent of the homeless are black people.

In addition, in 25 states and 50 major cities of the country, two thirds of the black people and Hispanics live near poisonous waste disposal places. And of the country's five largest rubbish disposal places, three are located in residential areas inhabited by ethnic groups. Almost all the largest poisonous waste disposal places are located on the South Side, a major residential area for black people in Chicago. Discrimination against ethnic groups has also extended to language, with 22 states having passed laws making English the only official language.

But in China ethnic-minority peoples not only enjoy all civil rights on an equal footing with the Han people, but also enjoy various privileges according to law. In the successive terms of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top Chinese legislature, the proportion of deputies from ethnic groups to the NPC in the total NPC membership is about twice that of the ethnic-minority peoples in the country's total population.

At the Eighth National People's Congress, which began in 1993, the proportion of the ethnic minority deputies to the NPC stood at 14.7 percent, much higher than the proportion of eight percent of the ethnic groups in the country's total population.

Significantly, all the 55 ethnic minorities in China have their own representatives in the National People's Congress. Among the current senior officials at the provincial and ministerial levels nationwide, some 10.5 percent are from ethnic minorities. All the heads of the country's autonomous regions, prefectures and counties are from the autonomous ethnic groups. Moreover, quite a number of the civilians from ethnic minorities are holding or once held the posts of vice-president of the country, vice-chairperson of the NPC, vice-premier of the State Council or president of the Supreme People's Court.

In China, the Constitution explicitly rules that all the nationalities enjoy the freedom of using and developing their own languages. In addition, the Chinese government helped 10 ethnic groups which used to have no written languages develop their own written languages. The Chinese Government has also given the ethnic minorities energetic support and financial assistance to develop culture and education by using their own languages. In

public activities the ethnic minority languages are put on a par with the language of the Han nationality, the largest in China. Citizens of various ethnic minorities enjoy the right to use their own languages. And government officials at various levels in areas inhabited by ethnic groups must use one or more languages which are commonly used in their own respective localities.

## 18. Gender Discrimination.

It is clearly stipulated in China's Constitution that women enjoy equal rights with men in the fields of politics, economy, culture, society and family life, while in the US such stipulations are not covered by its Constitution.

In China female deputies take up 21 percent at its current Eighth National People's Congress which began in 1993 and more than 20 percent at local people's congresses at all levels. However, in the US Congress, even after the elections in 1992, a year called the "Women's Year", female lawmakers only accounted for 10 percent or so and 18.4 percent at legislatures at all levels.

While female staff members in China's government departments account for 31 percent of the total, the figure in corresponding US departments stands at 22 percent. And while the number of women among China's senior leaders accounts for 19 percent, the figure in the US is less than 12 percent.

Job opportunities for women above the age of 15 are only 65 percent of those for men in the US, while in China, the proportion of women employment stands at 81 percent.

Women's unemployment rate is twice high as men's in the US, but for Chinese women it is only 13.4 percent higher than that for men.

In 1993 Chinese female technicians took up 35 percent of the nation's total, while in the US the proportion was 12.2 percent. The Chinese Constitution stipulates that men and women enjoy equal pay for equal work, yet in the US neither practically nor legally can women receive equal pay for equal work as men.

The monthly income for China's urban female workers account for 77.4 percent of that of male workers in 1990, while the corresponding proportion in the US stood at 59 percent.

Chinese women enjoy special labor protection by law during their menstruation, pregnancy, delivery and lactation. However, in the US there is neither fully paid maternity leave nor lactation leave with partial pay, nor employment protection during pregnancy and delivery on a legal base.

In 1993 the poverty rate for women (14.9 percent) was more than 1.5 times that for men (9.7 percent) in the US, while in China men's and women's poverty rates are almost the same. On the whole, the state of equality between men and women in China is better than in the US.

#### **19. Domestic Violence.**

In China, conjugal love, family democracy, respect for seniors and love for juniors are the mainstreams of the relationship among family members. Violence only afflicts some one percent of the Chinese families.

But domestic violence in the United States is more serious than in any other country in the world. According to a US national women's organization, the number of women who die as a result of domestic violence every five years is equal to the number of Americans who died in the Vietnam War.

In the United States, each year, six million women are injured and some four million women are victims of the domestic violence, and one third of the US women will be attacked by their partners. Moreover, 15-25 percent of the pregnant women are beaten and every year there are 170,000 women who are attacked when they are five-to-nine-months pregnant.

Each year two million US women are seriously injured in domestic violence and one million US women are so maltreated by their husbands, former husbands or boyfriends that they have to go to hospital. Among every 14 couples there will be a case of violence, and arms are used in 40 percent of such cases. Every year 2,000 to 4,000 women are beaten to death, among whom 1,500 are killed by their husbands. Half of all the homeless women and children left their families to escape domestic violence.

## **20. Narcotics Abuse.**

The United States is the largest drug market in the world and also the developed country which has the highest percentage of drug addicts. At present, about 20 million US citizens take marijuana, six million take cocaine and 500,000 take heroin. Every year nearly 500,000 die from drug taking. Over 230 in every 100,000 people commit crimes relating to drugs. About 80 percent of the prisoners took drugs or were involved in drug-related problems before they were imprisoned, and 60 percent of the prisoners are drug criminals.

Drug taking not only damages the health of the drug takers, but also causes disastrous consequences to the unborn generation. Since the 1980s when "crack" became widespread, there have been more and more babies born to addicted mothers. According to statistics, every year about 11 percent, or 375,000, of new-born babies in the United States are harmed by drugs while they are still embryos.

China has been effectively cracking down on crimes relating to drugs according to laws. Although a few people are involved in drug taking or trafficking in China, the situation in China is far from that in the United States, where drug taking runs rampant.

## **21. AIDS.**

As a result of increased homosexuality and promiscuity, AIDS has become a serious social problem which is threatening to the lives of Americans.

Statistics in 1993 from the Center for Disease Control showed that 339,000 people in the US were suffering from the killer disease. More than 200,000 people have died of the disease since it first appeared in 1981.

In 1993, statistics showed there were 25.4 cases of AIDS for every 100,000 people in the US, the highest incidence in the developed nations.

AIDS has become the number one killer of American men aged 25 to 44, and the fourth killer of American women in the same age group.

AIDS not only is killing more sufferers, but also is bringing disastrous consequences to the coming generations.

Statistics show that one third of the babies in the US born to mothers with AIDS contract the disease and eventually die of it, and two thirds of them are orphaned because the mothers die.

There does not exist in China the AIDS disaster that has been plaguing the US.

## **22. Testing on Human Bodies.**

The United States launched massive nuclear tests and chemical weapons tests with living people after the Second World War.

According to US official sources, in the 30 years after World War II the federal government conducted 1,400 different radioactive experiments in which 23,000 people were used as guinea pigs. However, this figure did not include the experiments launched by the US Department of National Defense and Department of Energy.

According to sources at the US Department of Energy, the United States has done nuclear testing on human beings many times. In the 48 disclosed nuclear radiation experiments with human bodies as targets, about 1,200 people have suffered nuclear radiation.

The sources also released that from 1945 to 1963 those hundreds of thousands of US troops who were marching near the atomic bomb testing spot in Nevada State had 400 times higher rates of blood cancer than the average rate of US residents.

The United States also used human bodies for experiments with chemical and biological weapons, including testing human bodies with chemical reagents, psychedelic and poisonous bacteria. The US army has publicized the names of 12,000 people who might have been harmed by its chemical experiments.

According to the investigation of the General Accounting Office of the US Congress, from 1940 to 1974 the US government experimented on 500,000 people (including blacks, soldiers, women, children and retarded persons), among whom 210,000 were, unconsciously in most cases, affected by radioactive materials. Moreover, the United States also collected human tissues from abroad for nuclear testing and conducted experiments for bacteriological warfare upon human bodies in some African, Asian and European countries, which brought about all kinds of "strange illnesses".

Such inhuman things have never happened in the People's Republic of China.

### **23. The Encroachment on Human Rights of Other Countries.**

The United States has launched some 70 wars and invasions against other countries in the over 200 years since its founding, causing countless casualties among foreign civilians. Moreover, US troops used bacteriological weapons and defoliants against civilians in the Korean War and the Vietnamese War. The US is the only country in the world to disregard international law to the extent of sneaking an attack on the presidential palace of another country, kidnapping the president and meting out punishment according to its own law. Over a long period of time the US has built many military bases around the world and stationed several hundred thousand soldiers there. American soldiers have committed many crimes against the human rights of the people who live there. A case in point is that in 1995, three American soldiers raped a 12-year old girl student in Okinawa, Japan.

The United States, which possesses the world's largest nuclear arsenal, has conducted the most nuclear tests in the world and is the only country that has ever used nuclear weapons. Moreover, the US has never undertaken not to use nuclear weapons first.

In comparison, the number of nuclear tests carried out by China accounts for only about 4.1 percent of that of the US, and the amount of nuclear weapons China possesses accounts for only 1.2 to 1.8 percent of the figure of the United States. China has unilaterally promised on the first day of acquiring nuclear weapons that it will never be the first to use them and that it will not use or even threaten to use them against nuclear-free countries or regions.

#### **24. Attitude towards International Documents on Human Rights.**

Up to now the US has not entered the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child or other important international conventions on human rights.

China, however, since the restoration of its legitimate seat in the UN in 1971, has been adopting an active attitude towards the international conventions on human rights passed by the UN. It has so far entered 15 such conventions, including the above-mentioned ones, and conscientiously performed its duties prescribed in the conventions.

China has always been a co-sponsor of the motion on the resolution on development rights in the UN Human Rights Committee, actively taking part in formulating and supporting the UN to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Development. However, the US has opposed the designation of development rights as a category of human rights. It is the only country among the Western countries that has voted against the Declaration.

Full enjoyment of human rights requires all countries in the world to devote painstaking efforts before they can reach this noble objective. Virtually no country in the world can style itself as being perfect in terms of human rights conditions. Due to limitations in historical and economic development, China has a long way to go before it realizes the goal of fully enjoying human rights. However, it is a basic fact that China has been doing much better than the US in terms of equally enjoying and universally guaranteeing basic human rights and freedom. The US, on the other hand, should make greater efforts to improve its domestic human rights conditions. The US is not qualified at all to feed its own arrogance and make indiscreet remarks or criticisms against China on this matter.